

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 TRSE-00
/059 W

-----112023Z 008338 /44

R 111810Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2121
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION NATO
CINCLANT
CINCUSAFE
CINCUSAREUR
CINCUSNAVEUR
USCINCEUR
USDOCOSOUTH
USLOSACLANT
USNMR SHAPE
CSAF WASHDC
OSAF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 440

E.O. 11652: GDS
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TAGS: MPOL, NATO, DPC
SUBJECT: ITALIAN OUTLOOK ON AWACS

REF: ROME'S 19851

1. FOLLOWING UP ON EARLIER BRIEF AMBASSADORIAL CONVERSATION
WITH MFA'S SEC GEN, MANZINI, DCM PURSUED SUBJECT OF AWACS

ON JANUARY 11 WITH HEAD OF MFA'S NATO OFFICE, SALLEO.

2. SALLEO SAID THAT GOI, SPECIFICALLY MOD AND PARTICULARLY IAF, CONTINUES TO HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH AWACS, SOME OF WHICH WERE SCHEDULED FOR AIRING AT JANUARY 11 DRC LUNCH IN BRUSSELS. MOST WERE FAMILIAR (SEE PRIOR EMBASSY REPORTS) BUT A FEW NEW TWISTS AND ONE NEW (TO US, AT ANY RATE) ELEMENT APPEARED IN THE ARGUMENTATION.

3. CONCERNING FUNDING, SALLEO SAID THAT THE AIR FORCE BILL FOR EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION (WHICH HE CONSISTENTLY TERMED THE "MRCA" BILL) IS IN TROUBLE IN THE PARLIAMENT. THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT ANY BILL TO FUND AWACS MIGHT BE RE-DIRECTED TO TAKE THE MONEY OUT OF REGULAR SERVICE BUDGETS, A "SOLUTION" TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO MOD. ACCORDING TO SALLEO, THE AIR FORCE FEARS THAT "DIVERSION" OF ITS FUNDS TO AWACS MIGHT RESULT IN EARLY WARNING OF AIRBORNE ATTACK TO WHICH THE RESOURCE-SHORT IAF COULD RESPOND WITH "ONLY A SALUTE AS THE RUSSIANS FLY OVER".

4. ITALIAN QUESTIONS ON OPERATIONAL ASPECTS ARE NOT LIMITED TO INADEQUATE COVERAGE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA (PARA 2.B, REFTEL) PROPER BUT ALSO TO AWACS' SURVIVABILITY IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENT. WHILE TESTS MAY SHOW IT IS DEFESNSIBLE IN CENTAG AREA OF CONCENTRATED GROUND AND AIR DEFENSE SYSTEMS, IT WOULD BE MUCH MORE VULNERABLE OPERATING SOUTH OF THE ALPS. MOD BELIEVES THAT IN A CRUNCH IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO MOVE AWACS
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OPTIMUM ORBITS IN THIS AREA SOME HUNDRED OR SO MILES TO THE WEST TO INSURE IT AGAINST HOSTILE ATTACK, LOWERING ITS UTILITY.

5. AS BETWEEN THE CHANCES OF FUNDING AWACS VS. INFRASTRUCTURE AUGMENTATION, SALLEO FELT THERE IS "MORE GIVE" ON INFRASTRUCTURE, AND THOUGHT SOMETHING MIGHT BE WORKED OUT (SEPTTEL).VOLPE

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Message Attributes

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Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 11-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770162/aaaaccqg.tel
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Litigation History:
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